



PHILADELPHIA YOUTH ORCHESTRA  
*Ovation Award*



Presented and Endowed by H.E.L.P.<sup>®</sup> Foundation  
Sponsored by Jacobs Music Company, J.W. Pepper and WRTI

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Sunday • May 31 • 2015 • 3:00 p.m.

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The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts  
Verizon Hall

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## Shirley Curtiss • Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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*Shirley Curtiss provides students with a strong sense of self-discipline and encourages them to become better musicians and overall people.*

Renowned bassoon pedagogue, Shirley Curtiss served as the founder and lead faculty member of Settlement Music School's woodwind program for nearly 50 years. A native of Illinois, she studied bassoon with Sol Schoenbach and maintained an extensive performing career in Philadelphia, having held principal positions with the Pennsylvania Ballet and Pennsylvania Opera Theater. Mrs. Curtiss received the Chamber Music America Award as well as the Gruber Award for her excellence as a chamber music teacher. Mrs. Curtiss' students and ensembles have performed as soloists and hold positions in many major symphony orchestras in the United States and abroad, including the New York Philharmonic and National Symphony.

**Nominator:**

**Lauren Milewski, Springfield, PA**

Lauren has studied bassoon for over four years with Mrs. Curtiss, who through her actions and principles became a role model in all aspects of Lauren's life. Lauren currently attends Springfield High School and was previously a member of the Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra before joining the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra.

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**Karen P. Burgman • Fountainville, Pennsylvania**

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*Karen Burgman's "passion and enthusiasm is contagious, and she instills that same contagious enthusiasm in her students."*

An award-winning chamber musician, collaborative pianist, teacher, and composer, Karen has performed coast to coast in the USA, Canada, and Europe. Notable venues include Carnegie Hall, the Toronto Center for the Performing Arts, the National Gallery of Art, Boston's Symphony Hall, and Jordan Hall. Karen performs regularly with other instrumentalists, including performers from the Philadelphia Orchestra, Grammy-nominated artists, and faculty from Oberlin and Juilliard. She serves on the faculty at the internationally recognized Credo Chamber Music Festival in Oberlin, Ohio, and is the founding pianist of the Credo Trio. Karen is the founding artistic director of Sola Gratia Musicians, a choral program for homeschool students, now including seven choirs, in Bucks County, PA. Certified in Dalcroze Eurhythmics, Karen received her Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory. Karen teaches piano privately at Cairn Community Arts Academy, serves as a coach to chamber ensembles, and is a masterclass clinician to college and high school level musicians. Graduates of her private studio have pursued conservatory-level musical training and musical professions.

**Nominator:****Elise Venter, Warrington, PA**

A piano student of Karen Burgman's for five years, Elise credits her teacher and mentor for giving her the confidence to challenge herself and arise to any difficult occasion.

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**Jonathan P. Holland • Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey**

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*Jonathan Holland instills students with a sense of gratitude and humility through his teaching.*

Jonathan P. Holland is Music Department Chairman at The Pilgrim Academy, Galloway, New Jersey, where he has taught for the past 30 years. He directs the 50-voice Pilgrim Academy Choir, teaches lessons on a wide variety of instruments, and directs the Pioneer (elementary), Gateway (junior high) and Festival Orchestra (high school). The Festival Orchestra placed first in the national competition of the American Association of Christian Schools, held in April 2015 at Bob Jones University, Greenville, South Carolina. He has also taught at the Cseh Summer School of Music, Houghton, New York since 2003, directing Junior High and Senior High orchestras. Among the things he enjoys are: spending time with his family, being outdoors, reading, composing and arranging music, and studying foreign languages.

**Nominator:**

**Inez Yu, Egg Harbor City, NJ**

A violist with the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra and Settlement Music School, Inez admires Jonathan Holland for his ability to work with a variety of music students with patience and kindness.

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## Ralph T. Jackson • Lansdale, Pennsylvania

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*Ralph Jackson brings out the best qualities in all of his students while encouraging them to reach their full musical and personal potential.*

Ralph T. Jackson is a music educator who teaches strings to approximately 200 Kindergarten through 6th grade students at Bridle Path Elementary and Montgomery Elementary Schools in the North Penn School District. Mr. Jackson teaches Suzuki violin classes to children and parents beginning in Kindergarten, traditional string lessons to children in grades three through six, the 120 members of the Bridle Path/Montgomery Orchestra, and the Select String Ensemble. Mr. Jackson is a recipient of the "Citation of Excellence" award from the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) for his work at the elementary level. He sits on the board of ArCoNet (The Arts and Community network), and was the founder and director of the award winning North Penn Youth Orchestra. Mr. Jackson has served as conductor of the Elite Strings Community Orchestra at the Doylestown Community Conservatory in Doylestown, Pa., and orchestra director for the Dali String Quartet Summer Chamber Camp and Festival in Doylestown, Pa.

### **Nominator:**

**Amanda Ragar, Lansdale, PA**

Amanda, a member of numerous musical organizations including the Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra and Arco Net Chamber Orchestra, acknowledges Ralph Jackson for setting the stage and helping her to begin pursuing a career in viola performance.

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**Robert Kesselman • Havertown, Pennsylvania**

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*Robert Kesselman motivates students and gives them confidence and the tools to embrace new challenges.*

Robert Kesselman, a native Philadelphian, attended Temple University and the Curtis Institute of Music. In 1980, he won a section bass position with the Pittsburgh Symphony, where he remained until 1987. He had always dreamed of playing in The Philadelphia Orchestra, and in 1987 he was accepted into the bass section. When he is not playing in the Orchestra, he enjoys teaching, solo playing, and performing chamber music. He was formerly on the faculty of the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and currently teaches at Temple University.

**Nominator:**

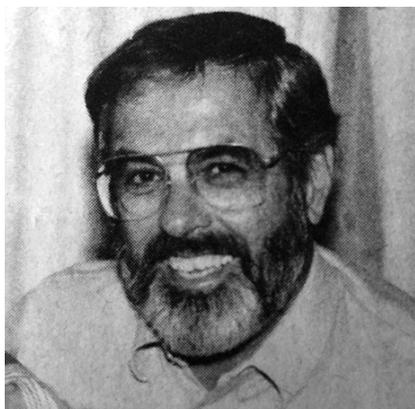
**Luke Mottola, Havertown, PA**

Luke, a member of the Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra and Delaware County Youth Orchestra, appreciates Robert Kesselman for inspiring him to succeed and helping him to view music as a joy, rather than a burden.

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## Dr. Anton Kiehner • Cary, North Carolina

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*Dr. Anton Kiehner demonstrated leadership and compassion and taught his students that "music can express everything you cannot say in words."*

A graduate of the 1955 class of Lebanon Valley College, Dr. Anton Kiehner taught in the Tredyfrin/Easttown School District for 33 years. By 1958, he was the Director of Bands at Conestoga High School, a position he held for 25 years. As for the highlights of his career, Kiehner says, "The Rose Bowl Parade was one of the best events. This was something that the whole community got involved in. It took a lot of money and effort to send the entire band and orchestra to California, but it was worth it." After 25 years at Conestoga, Kiehner took a sabbatical leave and when he returned in September of 1983, he started teaching at Valley Forge Intermediate School. During that time, he grew the chorus from 15 to 350 students, started guitar classes, as well as an opera appreciation class. As a retiree, Dr. Kiehner and his wife first settled in Ocean City, New Jersey, where they were members of a community choir. They now happily reside in Cary, North Carolina.

### **Nominator:**

**Sally Kuhns, Portland, OR**

Sally, an alumnus of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, has many fond memories of Dr. Anton Kiehner when he was her band director and credits him for her long, successful career as a professional musician and educator.

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## Irving Ludwig • Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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*Irving Ludwig inspired students to strive for artistry through musical excellence.*

A native Philadelphian, Irving Ludwig received his musical education and training at the prestigious Settlement Music School. At the age of 20, he became one of the youngest members to join the Philadelphia Orchestra, where he served for 39 years. During his years as a violinist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, he taught privately and at the Settlement Music School. Students and colleagues admired him for his humor, deep commitment, and analytic approach to music. In 1991, he was appointed Music Director of the Lansdowne Symphony Orchestra. His passion, drive and personal connection with the LSO members instilled a unique corps d'esprit within one of most respected orchestras in the Philadelphia area. Music, family and friends were inextricable elements throughout his life. He taught both of his sons who are now accomplished musicians. An avid chess player, on the historic 1973 Philadelphia Orchestra tour to China, Irving twice beat the noted music critic and chess writer Harold Schonberg. Irving Ludwig passed away in Philadelphia in 2012, at the age of 83.

### **Nominator:**

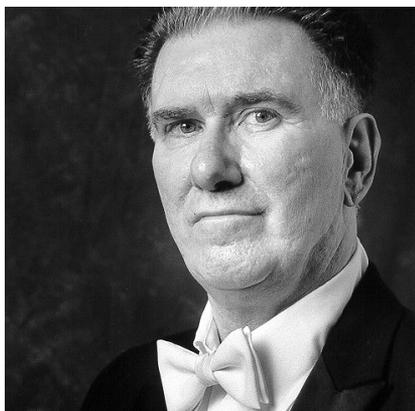
**Michael Ludwig, Philadelphia, PA**

Michael, an internationally acclaimed violinist, and Irving's son, recalls that his father "was a great teacher, not only because he was a brilliant artist, but because he had so much passion and cared so much."

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 Clinton F. Nieweg • Glenside, Pennsylvania
 

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*Clinton Nieweg teaches students that music requires a life long commitment to the art.*

Clinton F. Nieweg, retired Principal Librarian of The Philadelphia Orchestra is currently president of ~ Proof Purr-fect Research ~ a company that locates music for conductors, librarians and players worldwide. Mr. Nieweg graduated from West Chester University with a Bachelor of Science in Music Education with a concentration of String Bass, Harp and Orchestra Library Science. Prior to his joining the Orchestra, Mr. Nieweg was head of the instrumental department at J.W. Pepper & Son Music Publishers and rental librarian at Theodore Presser Music Publishers. Mr. Nieweg joined The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1975 as an assistant librarian and met his life-long goal by becoming principal librarian in 1979. It was at this time, he became a mentor to other students wanting to become orchestra librarians. Creating this career for musicians is a specialty of Mr. Nieweg as no school is currently offering a program in orchestra librarianship. Some of his students are now librarians at the Chicago Symphony, MET Orchestra NYC, National Symphony DC, Toledo Symphony Ohio, New World Symphony (Miami) – to name a few. Mr. Nieweg retired from The Philadelphia Orchestra in 2003 and continues to mentor orchestra librarian students, compile research for conductors and librarians.

**Nominator:**

**Cynthia Ficca, Boothwyn, PA**

Cynthia, having been encouraged by Clinton Nieweg to attend West Chester University, remarks that he is “still a dear friend and forever teacher – we never stop learning and teachers never stop teaching.”

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## David Schopp • Fort Washington, Pennsylvania

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*David Schopp has been a source of inspiration to thousands of music students for nearly three decades.*

David L. Schopp received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Music Education from the Pennsylvania State University and received a Master of Music Degree in trombone performance from West Chester University. He is currently celebrating his 27th year as a music educator: For the past sixteen years, David has taught at Hatboro-Horsham High School, where he conducts the Concert Band and Symphonic Bands, and teaches Guitar, Music Appreciation, and Rock Ensemble classes. He is also the Assistant Director of the Upper Dublin High School Marching Band, where he has the incredibly unique opportunity to teach his son, who is a member of the ensemble. David is a proud father to his son Maxwell, and daughter, Mackenzie.

### **Nominator:**

**Michael Duncan, Harboro, PA**

Michael, a trumpet player and current student at Millersville University, recognizes David Schopp as a crucial role model for helping him become the person he is today.

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**Anthony H. Williams • Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

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*Anthony Williams encourages students to give back to their communities through music and volunteering.*

Anthony “Tony” Williams is a legendary alto saxophonist who truly represents “The Sound of Philadelphia”. Having graduated from Abington High School, he then attended Tennessee State University. Tony worked in the Philadelphia School District for over 25 years and spent most of his teaching career at three schools: Barratt Junior High School, Ada Lewis Middle School, and AMY Northwest Middle School. He is the founder and the director of the Mount Airy Cultural Center and has performed and/or recorded with many notable artists, including Kenny Gamble, Leon Huff, The O’Jays, Terrell Stafford, Grover Washington Jr., and Wynton Marsalis. Tony has taught and mentored many students in education and music that have continued to make powerful contributions to the world at large. He has received hundreds of distinguished awards and honors, and has a jazz festival named after him - The Tony Williams Scholarship Jazz Festival.

**Nominators:**

**Mark Mitchell, Bear, DE**

Having known Anthony Williams for over four decades, Mark was inspired by him to pursue a career in not only jazz performance, but music education as well.

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# Philadelphia Youth Orchestra Ovation Award

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The Philadelphia Youth Orchestra **Ovation Award For Inspiration and Outstanding Leadership in Music Education** honors an outstanding music teacher in the Delaware Valley Region who, while imparting musical knowledge, builds character, self-confidence and capabilities that position students for success in every aspect of their lives. The OVATION AWARD highlights the significance of music education and applauds the positive impact of music teachers on the greater community. It is presented and endowed by H.E.L.P.® Foundation and sponsored by Jacobs Music Company, J.W. Pepper and WRTI-90.1 FM.

Nominators were asked to submit a brief application and statement of no more than 250 words, answering the question: "How Has Your Music Teacher Changed Your Life?"

The Top Ten Finalists and one Grand Prize Winner have been selected by a Blue Ribbon Panel, consisting of representatives from regional universities, colleges, conservatories, and institutions.

The Top Ten Finalists have been invited, with their nominators, to attend the award ceremony and PYO concert on Sunday, May 31, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts.

The Grand Prize Winner will be announced and presented with an award tribute, cash prize, and other recognition from our sponsors. All finalists will each receive a recognition award from our sponsors. Additionally, the Nominator of the winning nominee will be recognized.

## **Past Awardees:**

### **2014 Grand Prize Winner**

William Cain – Willow Grove, PA

### **2014 Finalists**

Derek Barnes – Merion Station, PA

Thomas Elliott – Narberth, PA

Elizabeth Kaderabek – Bala Cynwyd, PA

Hirono Oka – Cherry Hill, NJ

Anthony Prisk – Philadelphia, PA

Angela D. Riggs – Flourtown, PA

Kimberly Rowe – Philadelphia, PA

Shelley Beard Schleigh – Wilmington, DE

Byrnina Socolofsky – Glassboro, NJ

